



# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF Human Rights

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DIVISIONS OF:  
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES  
CRIMINAL & JUVENILE JUSTICE PLANNING  
DEAF SERVICES  
LATINO AFFAIRS  
NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
STATUS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS  
STATUS OF WOMEN  
STATUS OF ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDERS

## Iowa Commission on Native American Affairs September 16, 2009, 1:30 p.m. Teleconference Meeting

Agenda Item	Minutes
Members Present	Judy Allen, Chair Karen Mackey Theresa Essmann-Mahoney Judy Yellowbank, Vice Chair Greer Sisson Franklin Dean Phillips Vicky Apala-Cuevas Larry Lasley
Members Absent	John Jewett Joe Dan Coulter George Leduc
Other Attendees	Molly Pim (1:45) Dottie Schiltz, DHR, Recording Secretary Rick Rutter for Brian Jennings, IGOV
Agenda Items	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by Chair Allen at 1:35 p.m.</li> <li>2. Roll Call. See above. A quorum was present.</li> <li>3. Approval of Agenda – Discuss Oct 5, 2009 Meeting with Governor</li> </ol> <p>Chair Allen reviewed agenda item. She explained that only order of business we have on the agenda, are the priority issues we all have talked about and who was attending the meeting. She explained that some of Commissioners expressed an interest in meeting with the Governor and wanted to discuss who would attend that meeting. Consensus approved agenda.</p>
Minutes	<p>Chair Allen reported that one-half hour had been allotted for the meeting with the Governor. The priority items determined at the last meeting to be discussed along with the budget, include the ICWA (Iowa Childcare Welfare Agency) issues, and issues with correctional facilities; i.e., the wood and rock issue as well as issues of disrespect of Native American inmates items. She queried attendees for any additional issues or concerns they wished to bring to Governor's attention. Chair Allen noted that those three issues would take up the half hour that had been allotted. Essmann Mahoney echoed that thought. In confirmation, Chair Allen also noted that the Commission in discussion prior to the July meeting and at the planning meeting that these were the issues considered as the highest priority items at this point. She reiterated how responsive the DOC was being when working with them on the inmate issues. Regarding agenda issue on who would be attending, she announced that she (Judy Allen), Judy Yellowbank, and Vicki Apala-Cuevas would be attending, as well as Teresa Essmann Mahoney who had expressed her interest. The number of attendees is kept to minimum, in order that we do not have a quorum. One other commissioner that would like to go could before a quorum has been set. They were advised that if a quorum exists, it is considered an open meeting. After speaking with Brian Jennings, Chair Allen explained there was not enough time available to consider the possibility of open meeting; i.e., to get all set up with Governor's office and how it has to be played out. We have to stick with only five commissioners going. She then went on to explain that Judy Yellowbank had asked that Frank LeMere attend the meeting with us, and because we had talked about DOC, Judy Morrison, as who is state advocate for native Americans had asked her to attend as well. Both those people have said that they will provide a brief in writing so they do not have to take up any time in speaking and if they do have to speak to present it, it would be one minute or less, and we agreed to that. I also talked to both of them about the issue that there were commissioners concerned about other people being</p>

invited to that meeting and their concern about looking like we stand on our own. Chair Allen expressed her thoughts as follows: "Was that while we do stand on our own, the reason for the other two coming was because they support our efforts and because they have a big voice in Iowa and have been doing it for years that it is not going to hurt us by having someone else there, at least those two, they are both native Americans and both fighting for same things we are, so that was my thought, and I know some of you expressed opposition to that. At this time, Chair Allen open the floor to discussion in regards to that. Discussion follows:

Essmann Mahoney - I was one that obviously had disagreement to anyone other than a commissioner attending for couple of reasons. # 1. As much as I have all kinds of respect for Frank and Judy, they do wonderful work, but however, they are not commissioners. I get that yes they have a very important voice, but I myself can think of two or three people I would like to take. And I think if we start going down that road we are in fact creating defacto commissioners. I think this first meeting with the governor we need to make our faces known to him, and create a clear picture for him who his commissioners are and have him become familiar and acquainted with our faces before we introduce others into that mix. Maybe down the road it would be appropriate to bring other folks into the picture but I think for this very first meeting it should be just commissioners, and commissioners alone. Particularly, given what a short time we have to spend with him. A ½ hour is just not much, I understand that they say they are not going to take up a whole lot of time, but as we all know as people who believe in what we do, our passion sometimes takes over that and we can start talking, and talk and talk on something you feel passionately about. I think that should be reserved for this meeting at least for the commissioners to have the ability to express those concerns.

Anyone else.

Lasley - I certainly agree with Teresa... I think even further for me, if the commission is going to meet with the governor or legislators, or agency folks, to me if those are commission functions, then I would say any meeting that the commission decides to have should only involve commissioners, again following what Teresa said, there may be some instances where we go into meetings or we attend functions that are in cooperation or coincide with other individuals or other groups, for example the tribes, there may be instances where we go into tribal government representatives to the governor, legislators or agencies. Again, if the commission is initiating these things I think before any individual commissioners begin inviting people, that question needs to be answered by the commission first, that way we can avoid having to go back now to review someone's suggestion to invite other people in.

Allen - I know that email's were sent out (Judy Y are you there) Do you remember how long ago emails were sent out that Frank and Judy were going to be attending also?

Yellowbank - It was like right after you sent out the first email. I just want to add, that yes I did invite Frank LeMere, to come. And, that was based on the work that we have done in our community and we are highly represented in the State for this area for the Native American population and not just one tribe, several. And we work in a tri-state area, close to reservations and that is why we have high representation of tribes, and I know everyone understands that and we are not aligned with any certain tribe, we are a community of intertribal community in this area for years, everything that we have done in our community we have done on a voluntary basis, nobody gets paid for it. And, I think we have done pretty well as far as getting our issues out there regarding our community. We have initiated the Community Initiative for Native Children and Families and all that is a voluntary effort. We have a long history of dealing with the state people, the governor, this is not our first as an interagency community, this isn't our first visit with Governor and am sure it won't be the last. I thought that being a public entity representing many many people, that as a commission that we not only work on behalf of the little commission ourselves through the governor, if there is an agency that isn't aligned with anybody that is free to speak about the issues and has a strong voice in the state and the nation would then provide support to us and let the govern know that the commission has strong backing from the native community would make our voice stronger when asking that we be given a budget. Because our issues here are mainly child welfare and family preservation but as I said at the planning meeting, there are several issues that affect native families when it comes to jobs, opportunities, education, the whole wide range that we mentioned in keeping our families together, many issues that we face as Indian people

that live in this area and I just that was my rationale and stated that right at the first email to Judy Allen. The Indian people in our community are faced with many issues and have no one in our community to fall back on, when our people need help they are always told to go see your tribe go see your tribe. Well, we live in the state of Iowa, we live in Sioux City, Iowa, these people need to work with us and help us. Because we have a lot of issues that we put ourselves in a lot of things, but a lot of it comes from discrimination and racism and I know that for a fact. That is why I think we need to show not only that we are appointed by the governor and state legislators but we also have strong support from the people we are here to represent.

Essmann Mahoney – Well, I don't think there is any dispute that Frank is a strong advocate. This is not what my opposition is. It is just that I don't feel that the five/four of us going along, that we can present that information on our own just as well as anyone else can.

Yellowbank – But we are not doing a very good job after one year. I think we need continued and outright support and I had opportunity to listen to a lady last week that had mentioned to us at a meeting, state recognized council that works under state of Iowa, while yes we are an appointed commission or council that there are certain things where our hands are going to be tied and that is why we are going to need someone from outside community to support our issues and I think this is that thing that she was talking about, because we need to show we do have wide range of support from the community.

Essmann Mahoney– Let me ask this question. If each one of us,— Are you open to any of us bringing anyone we want to? Because I can find strong advocates here as well. The point is that we need to keep this focused for this time. I am not saying that somewhere down the line that we don't, that this is when we bring these people in. But I don't think this is what should happen with this very first meeting with the governor.

Yellowbank – No, I think the very first meeting with the Governor we need to should show we are a strong commission and we have strong support in our communities for what we are asking for.

Essmann Mahoney – But I can do that. I can do that myself. So can you, so can Judy A, so can Vickie.

Yellowbank – You know, I am not sure, because when we were all told we are going to be a commission and then we are told we aren't going to have a budget for two or three years. I don't think we should settle for that, I don't think that should be acceptable to us especially to our people. I think we need a commission I think we need a budget. I recognized there are state cuts all over, but since I got on the commission and even before that I was getting tons of emails that people are getting lots, these other agencies and commissions are getting tons of money to put on dances, put on fairs, I think that some of the money should be stretched over to the native commission so we can have someone we can call on who is sensitive to our needs and has that direct voice to the governor. I don't think 2 or 3 years is going to work for us and I think we need to be a little stronger and rather than saying oh yes I understand that the state of Iowa is taking cuts and everyone is suffering and maybe they should right some grants. I think they could find money to deal with the budget. That is where I think we need to make our voice strong and make sure we have strong support from our people. I just invited one person from this area because we are a highly represented area.

Lasley – Then you should have invited Franklin, Franklin represents Sioux City just as well as you do. The point is,

Yellowbank - He had the opportunity though several months ago, back as far as May, and now couple weeks before the meeting. I think this is my opinion but I think we need just do what ever our commission needs to function a lot stronger and a lot better for the native people in this state.

Greer – That is a really good point Judy. And I understand and I agree with what Teresa is saying that I think when you are going to go to the Governor especially for the first time, your strength should come from the commission. And, saying that the commission has the support of the community behind it. Because for the governor to start to recognize that this commission is powerful and does have a very strong voice behind it, you are going to have to go up there as representation from just the committee.



Adjournment	<p>Because prior to the commission there was obviously a lot of community organizations and groups that would petition different things from the governor but not one voice that said this is my commission I represent this community. I think really at this point especially for this first meeting that everybody that is going up there will be do a fantastic job at relaying that message.</p> <p>Essmann Mahoney – I agree. We were chosen because we have strong voices. We do not need anyone else to go with us to say the same things. We can do that well enough on our own, I believe, every single one of us has that ability, or we would not have been chosen for our position.</p> <p>Mackey – I am going to have to get off the line for another meeting. I would have to agree with Teresa, and Greer, Larry. I think at this point for the first meeting, it should be commissioners. I see that both Frank and Judy have agreed to put something in writing regarding their support to the commission. That is great. Let's have them put that in writing and send it to the Governor ahead time so he has a chance to read that. Because it is important to show that they have supported us in a great way, that we have support from people from outside of the commission. I do think that the first meeting should just be the commission, but I am sorry I do have to get off the line.</p> <p>Chair Allen noted that a quorum was present and a vote could be taken before Karen's absence so she would have opportunity to vote. Consensus of group was to proceed with vote. Chair requested a motion be entertained. Commissioner Essmann Mahoney moved that for the meeting with the Governor those in attendance be commissioners of the Iowa Commission for Native American Affairs. Commissioner Lasley seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Roll Call Vote Was Taken: Lasley – Aye;; Yellowbank – Nay; Greer – Aye; Essmann Mahoney – Aye; Phillips – Aye; Mackey – Aye; Apala-Cuevas – Nay; Chair Allen declared with 5 -Ayes and 2 – Nays, Motion carried. She commented that she had spoken with both Frank and Judy Morrison of the possibility of this happening and I will just let them know.</p> <p>Commissioner Phillips for clarification inquired whether meeting with Governor was open or closed. Meeting is a closed meeting as quorum will not be present. Chair Allen reminded Commission that there was one more spot available for anyone else wanting to go.</p> <p>With no comments, and no further business to come before the Commission, Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lasley so moved. With that, Chair Allen adjourned at 2:00 p.m. wishing all a blessed day.</p> <div data-bbox="1226 1480 1485 1575" style="text-align: right;"> Submitted by  Dottie Schiltz  Recording Secretary </div>
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